

Stewart Atkins makes a big impact

WYCOMBE Wanderers, who have been looking for a positive striker ever since Ian Pearson moved to Millwall more than a year ago, seemed to have found the answer in the former Chesham player Stewart Atkins who made a big impact in Tuesday night's friendly against Malawi at Loakes Park.

Not only did Atkins turn up in the right place at the right time to score Wanderers first goal but he also a constant threat throughout the game with his sharp shooting and aggressive style of play. He is not afraid of going in where it hurts and twice had to receive attention from the trainer during the game.

Atkins was one of five newcomers on show for Wycombe against Ted Powell's Malawi who gained a surprise lead after seven minutes, when Chikafa pounced on an error by Keith Mead and slotted the ball past John Maskell.

This was Mead's first game since his ankle injury against Leatherhead last season. He certainly looked in need of

by MICHAEL KNOX: Wycombe 3, Malawi 1

match practice but was one of six players taken off at half-time.

But by then Wanderers had recovered from the early shock and taken a 2-1 lead. Atkins netted the equaliser in the 17th minute. After Birdseye's cross to the far post had exposed Malawi's weakness in the air. Dylan Evans headed down, Steve Long (ex Loughborough Colleges) pushed it forward

and Atkins supplied the finishing touch.

Then eight minutes before half-time Paul Birdseye was chopped down by Chamangwana as he advanced into the penalty area and Howard Kennedy scored from the spot to give Blues a deserved lead.

The second half was much quieter with Wycombe well in

command although unable to penetrate the ever improving Malawi defence until the later stages.

Atkins went close with a brilliant shot on the turn before Wycombe made sure of victory in the 87th minute. From an indirect free-kick just inside the area, the ball was tapped to Bobby Davies who crashed the ball past the goalkeeper as a huge gap opened up in front of him.

This result and performance will have pleased new manager Andy Williams, as Wycombe prepare to gain a revenge win tomorrow (Saturday), when they entertain Southern League side Minehead, who knocked Blues out of last season's F.A. Cup.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell (sub: P. Spitfire 45 mins), P. Birdseye (sub: R. Strong 45), R. Davies, K. Mead (sub A. Phillips 45), D. Allanson, S. Atkins, J. Priestley (sub: G. Mackenzie 45), D. Evans (sub: D. Harris 45), H. Kennedy, S. Long (sub: T. Scott 45).

MALAWI: D. Saidi, E. Mwafulirwo, R. Malola, D. Malefulu (sub: T. Kazembe 60 mins), J. Chamangwana, M. Sichinga, S. Dandize, M. Kaimfa, K. Dhir, C. Thewe, P. Chikafa.

Half-time: 2-1. **Scorers:** Wycombe — Atkins (17 mins), Kennedy (pen 37), Davies (87). Malawi — Chikafa (7).

TONY: NO PLANS

ONE person watching Tuesday night's match from the sidelines was Tony Horseman, whose 17 year career with Wycombe Wanderers is at an end.

Tony has no immediate plans to return to football. "I've been so long with Wycombe that I don't know if I would enjoy playing for another club. I might have the odd kickabout, but haven't made up my mind yet," he said.

There was some speculation that he would join his former Wanderers colleague John Delaney, who took over last week at Tring Town but that move seems unlikely.



Wycombe Wanderers exciting new striker Stewart Atkins in the thick of the action with a challenge of Malawi goalkeeper Saidi at Loakes Park on Tuesday night.